

PATENT APPLICATION

A System and Method For Data Transmission In DMT-Based DSL Modems

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A SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR DATA TRANSMISSION IN DMT-BASED DSL MODEMS

The present invention relates generally to DSL technology, and specifically to a method for improving data transmission in a DMT-based communication system.

5 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

It is well known that some current modems operating in accordance with G.992.1 and G.992.2 standards implement a transmitter with an Inverse Fast Fourier Transform (IFFT) size greater than the one specified by the standards. These modems may implement the transmitter in either the upstream (US) or downstream (DS) direction, or both. There are many reasons that may
10 influence this decision. For example, for an upstream channel the standard IFFT size is 64 points. However, an IFFT greater than 64 points may be justified for two reasons. A first reason is hardware symmetry with the downstream channel, since the downstream channel requires a larger Fast Fourier Transform (FFT). A second reason is ease of implementation of different Annexes of the G.992.1 and G.992.2 standards with the same data path.

Even though the use of a larger IFFT does not compromise interoperability between modems, their performance may be affected, particularly on short loops. Laboratory tests show that if the transmitter uses an IFFT other than that suggested by the standard on short loops, data rate penalties of approximately 25 to 30% are experienced.

Thus there is a need for a system and method for allowing the transmitter to use an IFFT having a size larger than that specified in the standard, while reducing data rate penalties. It is an object of the present invention to obviate or mitigate at least some of the above-mentioned disadvantages.

25 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with an aspect of the present invention there is provided a system and method for improving data transmission between a transmitter and a receiver in a Discrete Multitone (DMT) based Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) system. The transmitter includes an Inverse Fourier Transform (IFT) for modulating the data and the receiver includes a Fourier Transform (FT) for
30 demodulating the data. The transmitter determines whether or not a spectrum of the IFT output

is periodic with a clock of a predefined standard-size IFT. The transmitter communicates the determination to the receiver before the data transmission begins. The receiver adapts the FT if the determined spectrum is not periodic with the clock of the predefined standard-size IFT.

5 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

An embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the following drawings in which:

Figure 1a is a block diagram of a transmitter using an N-point IFFT;

Figure 1b is a block diagram of a transmitter using a 2N-point IFFT;

Figure 2a is a graph illustrating the amplitude frequency response of the filter $h(k)$;

Figure 2b is a graph illustrating the impulse response of the filter $h(k)$;

Figure 3 is a graph illustrating an output signal of the system illustrated in Figure 1a;

Figure 4 is a graph illustrating a difference between output signals of the systems illustrated in Figures 1a and b;

Figure 5 is a graph illustrating the frequency content of the graph illustrated in Figure 4;

Figure 6a is a graph illustrating the spectrum of an upsampled signal from the IFFT illustrated in figure 1a; and

Figure 6b is a graph illustrating the spectrum of a signal from the IFFT illustrated in figure 1b.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

For convenience, like numerals in the description refer to like structures in the drawings. Referring to Figure 1a, a conceptual model of a transmitter using a standard-size IFFT is illustrated generally by numeral 100. A transformer 102 is coupled to a prefix adder 104, which is coupled to an upsampler 106, which is coupled to a filter $h(k)$. The transformer performs an N-point IFFT on N Quadrature Amplitude Modulation (QAM) per-tone symbols, transforming the symbols into the time domain for transmission. Before the symbols are transmitted, the prefix adder 104 adds a cyclic prefix CP for providing a “guard time” for the symbols. The filter $h(k)$ represents channel and transmit front end filters, merged into one filter for illustrative purposes. The filter’s impulse response is sampled at a sampling frequency twice that of

transformer's frequency. Therefore, the upsampler 106 is required for upsampling the output of the prefix adder 104 to the sampling frequency of the filter $h(k)$.

Referring to Figure 1b, a conceptual model of transmitter using a doubled-size IFFT is illustrated generally by numeral 150. Similarly to the system illustrated in Figure 1a, transformer 152 is coupled to a prefix adder 154, which is coupled to a filter $h(k)$. The transformer 152 performs a $2N$ -point IFFT on $2N$ received DMT symbols, transforming the symbols into the time domain for transmission. Before the symbols are transmitted, the prefix adder 154 adds a cyclic prefix CP. Since the transformer has operated on $2N$ QAM symbols, the prefix adder 154 adds a cyclic prefix that is twice the size of that described with reference to Figure 1a. The filter $h(k)$ is the same as that illustrated in Figure 1a. However, the filter's impulse response is sampled at a sampling frequency that is the same as the transformer's frequency. Therefore, the upsampler 106 is not required for the present example.

While the two implementations described above, with reference to figures 1a and 1b, generate the same signal while transmitting constant QAM symbols (REVERB-like DMT symbols), it can be seen that the two generated signals are different in ShowTime mode. If the IFFT is performed on a repeated spectrum, that is, a normal spectrum with bins 1 to 32 and conjugate bins from 33 to 64, and then repeated for bins 65 to 128, the corresponding time domain signal will have every second sample set to 0. If, however, the IFFT is performed on a spectrum that is not repeated, that is a spectrum with bins 1 to 32, bins 33 to 96 zeroed and conjugate bins from 97 to 128, the corresponding time domain signal will not have every second sample set to zero. Rather, the samples are defined by the IFFT. When these signals are put through the channel (here represented by the transmit filter $h(k)$), there is a difference in the transient response. Thus, during ShowTime when adjacent symbols contain different signals due to the modulation, the difference appears at the boundary of the symbols. The steady state response to a sine wave input is a sine wave of the same frequency with different magnitude and phase. During REVERB, a continuous sine wave is transmitted. Thus, the steady state response, after allowing the transient to die away, is another sine wave regardless of the size of the IFFT.

To illustrate this point, an example related to the upstream channel is described. In particular, the upstream channel has a 552 kHz sampling frequency and its frequency response and impulse response are as illustrated in Figures 2a and 2b, respectively. In this example, the channel has been designed as a 6th order Chebyshev type 2 band-pass filter with 30-dB stop-band rejection.

For the system as described with reference to Figure 1a, the IFFT has 64 points and the cyclic prefix CP has 4 samples. For the system as described with reference to Figure 1b the IFFT has 128 points and the cyclic prefix CP has 8 samples.

For simplicity, it is assumed that only one bin, bin 12, is transmitted. Two QAM symbols, $1+j$, $-1-j$, are transmitted using two consecutive DMT symbols. Referring to Figure 3, the output signal of the system described with reference to Figure 1a is illustrated. The output signal of the system described with reference to Figure 1b is not illustrated, as it closely resembles Figure 3. Referring to Figure 4 the difference between the output signals of the systems described with reference to Figure 1a and 1b is illustrated. As illustrated, the difference between the two output signals is small and is concentrated around the cyclic prefix CP regions 402.

Referring to figure 5 a graph illustrating the frequency content of the graph illustrated in Figure 4 is shown. Referring once again to Figure 1a, the filter $h(k)$ is being sampled at a rate of 552 kHz. The 64-point IFFT operates at a frequency of 276 kHz and therefore its Nyquist frequency is 138 kHz. Therefore, one would expect any difference between output from figures 1a and 1b to occur at a frequency above 138 kHz. However, it is clear from the frequency content graph that the error signal between the two systems of Figure 1a and 1b also includes components below 138 kHz. This difference explains the data rate penalties that are incurred.

In order to overcome these errors, information is exchanged between a modem located at a subscriber's premises (ATU-R) and a modem located at a remote terminal or central office (ATU-C). This information is exchanged during G.hs (or handshaking) in order to let the receivers know how the transmit signals are generated. Thus, the receiver can adapt its signal processing algorithms to adequately process the received signal. That is, the IFFT size information is exchanged between the transmitter and the receiver during the modem initialization. The receiver adapts its signal processing algorithms to adequately process the

received signal in accordance with the transmitter's IFFT size. In particular, the FFT size and clock are matched to the IFFT size and clock. Also, a Time Domain Equalizer (TDEQ) runs at higher clock frequency consistent with the FFT clock frequency. This concept is described in greater details as follows.

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Referring to Figure 6a, the spectrum of an upsampled signal from the 64-point IFFT illustrated in figure 1a is shown. As shown in the diagram there is an image in the baseband (0 to 138 kHz) and an image in the first band above the Nyquist frequency (138 kHz to 256 kHz) representing a complex conjugate of the baseband. Because the 64-point IFFT is upsampled for the filter $h(k)$, two additional images are present in the following two bands (256 kHz to 414 kHz and 414 kHz to 552 kHz).

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Referring to figure 6b, the spectrum of the 128-point IFFT illustrated in figure 1b is shown. In this particular example the 128 point IFFT does not use image regeneration. As shown in the diagram there is an image in the baseband (0 to 138 kHz). Also, since the 128-point IFFT operates at 552 kHz, an image representing the complex conjugate of the baseband is located in the upper band (414 kHz to 552 kHz). There are no images present in the intermediate bands (138 kHz to 256 kHz and 256 kHz to 414 kHz).

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In the present embodiment, the transmitter informs the receiver whether or not transmit signal images, with periodicity equal to the clock of the standard-size IFFT, have been generated. The transmitter further informs the receiver of the size of the IFFT. If the images are periodic with the clock of the standard-size IFFT, then the receiver uses a standard-size FFT for demodulation. Otherwise the receiver uses a larger size FFT in accordance with the size of the IFFT. Since the period of the standard-size IFFT is 276 kHz, the spectrum illustrated in Figure 6a satisfies this condition, while the spectrum illustrated in Figure 6b does not. Therefore, the receiver demodulates the received signal using a 64-point FFT for the case illustrated in Figure 6a and demodulates the received signal using a 128-point FFT for the case illustrated in Figure 6b. Ideally, in this latter case, the FFT size should match the IFFT size, even though in practice a double size FFT typically suffices.

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In an alternate embodiment, the 128-point IFFT includes an image restorer. The image restorer adds the signal images missing in Figure 6b so that the frequency spectrum resembles that illustrated in figure 6a. Even though a 128-point IFFT is used, it is still possible to demodulate the signal using a standard size FFT at the receiver. Therefore, if the transmitted spectrum resembles that illustrated in Figure 6a, the receiver uses a standard size FFT, regardless of the size of the IFFT.

In yet an alternate embodiment, only the first image above the Nyquist frequency is needed in order to sufficiently approximate the signal transmitted using a standard-size IFFT. Therefore, it is only necessary to exchange information about the first image above Nyquist frequency. As illustrated in Figure 6a, the first image above the Nyquist frequency lies between 138 kHz and 276 kHz. In Figure 6b, the first image above the Nyquist frequency lies between 276 kHz and 414 kHz. That portion of the spectrum is either zero filled or contains the complex conjugate image of the baseband signal. The case where the portion above the Nyquist frequency is zero filled implies that the transmitter uses a larger than standard-size IFFT and the IFFT does not use image restoring. Thus, the receiver uses a larger than standard-size FFT. As previously described, it is preferable that the size of the FFT corresponds to the size of the IFFT, but a FFT doubled in size would suffice.

The case where the portion above the Nyquist frequency comprises the complex conjugate image of the baseband signal implies that the transmitter uses a standard-size IFFT or a larger than standard-size IFFT and image restoring. Thus, the receiver uses a standard-size FFT.

As previously described, the required information is exchanged before the receiver equalizer is trained. Therefore, G.hs has been selected as the preferred option to exchange the information. A parameter block is used for indicating the type of transmit signal images above the Nyquist frequency. The parameter block comprises an octet of bits. Codepoints in the octet are structured as bits 6 to 3 indicating an N value, where N is the number of IFFT points, and bits 2 and 1 defining the transmit signal images above the Nyquist frequency. This structure is described in more detail as follows.

Bits 6 to 3 are defined as n . That is, $(b_6b_5b_4b_3)=n$, where b_6 is bit 6, b_5 is bit 5, b_4 is bit 4, and b_3 is bit 3. If $1 \leq n \leq 15$, then $N=2^n$. Therefore, if the receiver needs to adjust the size of the FFT in accordance with the IFFT, it knows the size of the IFFT. If $n=0$, then N is not a power of 2. Although the use of an IFFT where N is not a power of 2 is discouraged, it is provided as an option. If $n=0$ the receiver preferably uses an FFT having an input N is a power of 2 closest to the IFFT size. In this case, an additional field may be required to transmit the size of the IFFT. If $b_2b_1 = 01$, where b_2 is bit 2 and b_1 is bit 1, then the complex conjugate of the baseband signal is present in the band above the Nyquist frequency and the receiver implements a standard-size FFT. If $b_2b_1 = 10$, then the band above the Nyquist frequency is zero filled and the receiver implements a N -size FFT. The case $b_2b_1 = 00$ is a special case, such as a less than standard-size IFFT is used at the transmitter. This case is generally discouraged but is provided as an option. The case $b_2b_1 = 11$ is reserved so that different vendors implementing the invention may implement proprietary techniques. The receiver reacts differently to this case depending on the vendor's implementation of the system.

Therefore, before data is exchanged between modems the receiver is made aware of how the transmitter is modulating the data. The receiver adapts to the transmitter if necessary, thereby reducing data rate loss and improving the overall operation of data transmission.

Although the invention has been described with reference to certain specific embodiments, various modifications thereof will be apparent to those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as outlined in the claims appended hereto.